The Publication History of *War and Peace*

First edition: in the monthly *Russky Vestnik*, numbers 1 and 2, 1865; numbers 2, 3, and 4, 1866. (The opening sections of the novel only, under the title *1805*.)

Second edition: the entire work published in two separate installments or separate printings, the first in 1868, comprising the first four volumes; the second, in 1869, reprinting the first volumes (but with some revisions of the text), plus volumes five and six.

Third edition: 1873; the entire work, but telescoped into four volumes, as part of an eight-volume edition of Tolstoy's collected works, edited by Tolstoy's friend N. N. Strakhov. In this set, *War and Peace* occupied volumes 5, 6, 7, and 8. The French passages were translated into Russian and the various historical and philosophical passages taken out of their original place in the text, rewritten, and grouped together at the end of the last (eighth) volume, in the form of an appendix, under the heading "Articles about the Campaign of 1812," subdivided into eighteen parts, with subheadings. (Tolstoy had yielded to his friends' entreaties to make these changes.) He also made many stylistic revisions.

Fourth edition: 1880; identical with the third edition.

Fifth edition: 1886; under the supervision of Tolstoy's wife. Used the text of the second edition of 1868–69, but this time divided into four volumes (as in the third edition) rather than into six, with further subdivisions. Some of Tolstoy's corrections made in the 1869 edition were not used in this fifth edition.

Sixth edition: also in 1886. A mixed text—the 1868–69 versions plus some textual changes from the third (1873) edition.

Many other editions followed. (The seventh, eighth, and tenth used the text of the sixth edition; the ninth, eleventh, and further posthumous editions used that of the fifth edition.)

In the 1880s, Tolstoy ceased taking an interest in the publication of his works, turning over the rights in *War and Peace* and other works to his wife. In the twentieth century, the fifth edition was used most often, but controversies continued among scholars about which edition was the best. The renowned scholar N. K. Gudzy, for example, argued in 1963 that the third edition was superior to all others.

Aylmer Maude and his wife, Louise Maude, translated *War and Peace* twice, once in 1920, and the second time for the Centenary edition, through the early 1930s. Our edition uses the second translation of the Maudes

(with emendations by the present editor, who took note of various errors and possibilities of improvements made by numerous reviewers and critics over the years since the first Norton Critical Edition was published). Those interested in further information about the details of the various editions and translations may wish to consult Aylmer Maude's discussion at various places in the three-volume translation of the novel in the Oxford University Centenary edition, which appeared between 1930 and 1932, and also pages 456–67 of Aylmer Maude's *The Life of Tolstoy*, also in the Centenary edition.

The editor of the Russian Jubilee (ninety-volume) edition of Tolstoy's complete works in Russian, A. E. Gruzinsky (who died on January 22, 1930), corresponded with Aylmer Maude and advised him on the choice of texts and editions. Gruzinsky's reasons for preferring the one he reprinted were explained by him on p. vii of volume 9 of the 1930 Russian Jubilee edition. See also Edgar H. Lehrman, *A Guide to the Russian Texts of Tolstoy's "War and Peace"* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1980).

There is also an interesting article by Munir Sendich, "English Translations of Tolstoj's 'Vojna i mir': An Examination of Difficult Renderings," *Russian Language Journal*, Michigan State University, vol. 41, nos. 138–39 (1987): 313–40. Sendich compares various English translations of the same difficult or puzzling or idiomatic passages in the novel. Several of his emendations to the Maude versions published in the first Norton Critical Edition of *War and Peace* have been adopted in the present edition.

Maude was the author of the summaries of the contents of each chapter. We have retained these for the guidance of the reader. Maude used the divisions into parts of Tolstoy's fifth edition, but he did incorporate corrections made in the text by Tolstoy himself in the third edition. The present edition is based on this combination of the fifth edition plus the 1873 corrections by the novelist himself.

Tolstoy's versions of place names sometimes differ from those common in Western histories (for example, his Schön Grabern for Hollabrünn). The sketch map of Borodinó was drawn by Tolstoy himself when he visited the site of the battle. The other maps (1805 to 1807) were new in the 1930 edition.

The Julian calendar used in the novel is twelve days behind the calendar common in Western Europe.

In Tolstoy's original Russian text, many of the upper-class characters converse in French, particularly in their political discussions. French was the common language of polite society at the time when the events were taking place. (However, to some extent, the voluminous French conversations also suggest that Tolstoy felt the upper classes were artificial and remote from down-to-earth Russian realities.) It has been estimated that two and a half percent of the text was in French. In the present edition, most of the French used so copiously in Tolstoy's version has been translated by Maude into English, but he left only enough French here and there to remind us that French was being spoken. In the Centenary edition (p. viii of vol. 3) Maude wrote: "It was as natural for Hélène to prefer French when discussing her matrimonial intentions as for Karataev to introduce homely Russian proverbs into his talk."

The Author on the Novel

Extracts from Tolstoy's Letters and Diaries (1865–1868)†

[*Letter to* A. A. *Fet*[1]*—January, 1865*]

What I published previously I consider only a test of the pen and ink. What I am printing now [first part of 1805] I liked better than the earlier things, but it seems weak, needed as an introduction. But what is coming! Write me what people say about it in places you know. . . .

[*Diary—March 2, 1865*]

I write, I revise. It is all clear, but the amount of work ahead frightens me. It is good to define the work that is ahead. Then, in view of the big things that are coming, you don't have to insist and don't revise details ad infinitum.

[*Diary—March 19, 1865*]

I became absorbed in reading the history of Napoleon and Alexander. In a cloud of joy and awareness of the possibility of doing great work, the idea caught me up of writing a psychological history of Alexander and Napoleon. All the meanness, all the phrases, all the madness, all the contradictions of the people around them and in themselves . . . I must write my novel and work for this.[2]

[*Diary—March 23, 1865*]

I write in the evening, not much, but all right. I am able to. All the time ideas about the new, which is more important, and dissatisfaction with the old. One must write every day without fail, not so much to get along with the work, but more in order not to get out of the track. Leave out more.

† All the letters quoted in this section were translated by George Gibian from volume 61 of the Jubilee edition of Tolstoy's works, *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy*, Moscow, 1953. Extracts from diaries, which may also be found in various volumes of the Jubilee edition, were translated by George Gibian from N. N. Gusev, editor, *Letopis zhizni i tvorchestva L. N. Tolstogo, 1828–90*, Moscow, 1958.

1. A. A. Fet was an important Russian poet of the mid-nineteenth century. There is a disagreement among Tolstoy scholars as to the date of this letter: Gusev gives January 10, and volume 61 of the Jubilee edition gives January 23.
2. "This" refers to a projected independent story which Tolstoy was writing at the same time as 1805, but of which nothing came.

[*Diary—March 28, 1865*]

The writing is going badly. I must leave out.

[*Letter to L. I. Volkonskaya*[3]*—May 3, 1865*]

Andrew Bolkonsky is nobody, the same as any character of a novelist, rather than of an author of biographies or memoirs. I should be ashamed to publish if my work consisted in taking down portraits, finding out, remembering. * * *

In the Battle of Austerlitz, which will be described later, but with which I began the novel, I needed a brilliant young man to be killed. Later in the novel I needed only the old Bolkonsky and his daughter. But since it is awkward to describe a character not connected with anything in the novel, I decided to make the brilliant young man a son of the old Bolkonsky. Then he caught my interest, a role appeared for him later in the novel, and I took mercy on him, only wounding him severely instead of killing him.

[*Letter to P. D. Boborykin*[4]*—July or August, 1865*]

Both your novels are written about a contemporary theme. Questions of *zemstvos*,[5] literature, emancipation of women, etc., are rendered primarily as polemic arguments, and these questions are not only of no interest to the world of art, they don't even exist there. Questions of the emancipation of women and literary parties seem important to us, unwittingly, in our literary Petersburg milieu, but they are all fluttering about in a little puddle of dirty water which seems to be an ocean only for those whom fate placed in the middle of that puddle. The goals of art are incommensurate (as mathematicians say) with social goals. The goal of the artist is not to solve a question irrefutably, but to force people to love life in all its innumerable, inexhaustible manifestations. If I were told that I could write a novel in which I should set forth the apparently correct attitudes toward all social questions, I would not devote even two hours of work to such a novel, but if I were told that what I shall write will be read in twenty years by the children of today and that they will weep and smile over it and will fall in love with life, I would devote all my life and all my strengths to it.

[*Letter to A. E. Bers—November, 1865*[6]]

This last job of polishing is very difficult and requires great straining. But I know from previous experience that this work has its own peak. When one has struggled to reach that peak, then one cannot stop and so continues

3. L. I. Volkonskaya had inquired of Tolstoy who was represented by the character with the name Andrew Bolkonski.
4. Peter D. Boborykin (1836–1919) was a sociologically oriented liberal writer.
5. *Zemstvos*, created in 1864, were one of Alexander II's reforms. *Zemstvos* were representative district boards elected by landowners, peasants, and townspeople.
6. Gusev dates the letter November 10 or 12, in disagreement with volume 61 of the Jubilee edition where it is dated November 3–4. Gusev bases his opinion on a diary entry.

on to the end, without a stop. Now I have reached that peak, and I know that now I shall soon finish this third part,[7] be it good or bad.

[*Diary—November 12, 1865*]

I am writing. I am finishing the third part. Much is clearing up nicely.

[*Letters to M. S. Bashilov*[8]*—April 4 and December 8, 1866; February 28, 1867*]

Hélène: Couldn't you make her bustier. (Plastic beauty of forms is her most characteristic trait.)

Pierre: His face is good (only add to his forehead more of an inclination to philosophize—a wrinkle or lumps above the eyebrows), but his body is too minute—it ought to be wider and fatter and larger.

The Evening at Scherer: The group is good, but Prince Andrew is tall and not sufficiently contemptuously lazy and gracefully sprawled out.

* * *

The old prince is fine, especially where he is with his son. That is just what I wanted. But I don't like Prince Andrew. He is tall, his traits big and coarse, an unpleasant sour expression of his lips, and then I can't imagine his standing like that and in such clothes. He must listen to his father with an indulgent and soft smile. Couldn't you soften Count Rostov and Marya Dmitrievna, take away their caricaturelike look and add tenderness and kindness? . . . Pierre must have larger features in general.

* * *

Tushin and the artillerymen are good, although I imagined Tushin young, but you have expressed beautifully his honorable comicalness.

[*Letter to A. A. Fet—November 7, 1866*]

I was pleased by your opinion of one of my heroes, Prince Andrew, and extracted a lesson from your condemnation. He is monotonous, boring, and merely *un homme comme il faut* in the whole first part. That is true, but I am to blame, not he. I intend not only to depict characters, their actions, and their encounters, but also to work history in. This greatly complicates my task, and I'm not succeeding at it, or so it seems. Hence in the first part I was preoccupied with the historical aspect, so that the development of character remains at a standstill and does not progress. This is a shortcoming which I came to understand after receiving your letter, and which I hope I have corrected.

7. From a note of Tolstoy's it is clear that the third part here refers to Book Five, the part concluding with Tilsit.
8. Bashilov was doing illustrations for *War and Peace*.

[*Entry in Tolstoy's Notebook—November 27, 1866*]

The poet takes the best things out of his life and puts them into his work. Hence his work is beautiful and his life bad.

[*Letter to P. I. Bartenev*[9]*—August 16–18, 1867*]

I cannot help scribbling. I am firmly convinced that this scribbling is very beneficial. I am not afraid of the bills from the printer—who, I hope, will not pick too many petty squabbles. The very parts you liked would be much worse if I had not scribbled five drafts of them.

[*Letter to P. I. Bartenev—November 1, 1867*]

I am sending the galley proofs. The manuscript of the third volume is finished, at last. I say at last, because the end of the third volume[1] was the most difficult place and the crux of the whole novel.

[*Letter to P. I. Bartenev—December 6, 1867*]

In the fourth[2] volume there are many French and German phrases. They must be translated, particularly the German ones.

In the fourth volume much is said about the Emperor and the Grand Duke. There is a place where Napoleon says to Balashev, "Beningsen must evoke terrible memories in Emperor Alexander." Cross out this place and similar places, if you find them dangerous in regard to censorship. I give you *carte blanche* to cross out everything that seems dangerous to you. You know better than I what is possible and what isn't.

[*Letter to P. I. Bartenev—December 8, 1867*]

Now that the work is approaching the end, I am becoming afraid that censorship or the printers might give us some nasty trouble. I place my only hope about these two matters in you.

[*Letter to M. P. Pogodin*[3]*—March 21 or 23, 1868*]

My thoughts about the boundaries of freedom and about our dependence on our surroundings are not casual thoughts which merely preoccupied me for a moment. These thoughts are the fruit of all the mental labor of my life and are an integral part of my view of life, which I worked out with a labor and a suffering that God alone knows, and they gave me absolute calm and happiness. And at the same time I knew and I know that people will praise the sentimental scene of the young lady in my novel, the ridi-

9. Peter Bartenev (1829–1912) was a historian and founder of the magazine *Russky Arkhiv*, which he edited from 1863 until his death. Bartenev worked as editor through most of the publication of the first edition of *War and Peace*. There was naturally much correspondence between Tolstoy and Bartenev, and this letter was in reply to the editor's reproaches that the author was making excessive changes, additions, "scribblings" on galley proofs.

1. The "end of the third volume" refers to Book Eight, Chapters 17 to 21. Natasha Rostova's infatuation with Anatole Kuragin.

2. "In the fourth volume" refers to Book Nine, Chapters 3 to 7.

3. M. P. Pogodin (1800–75) was a historian who is also referred to in Boris Eikhenbaum's essay, p. 1126.

culing of Speransky, and such rubbish, which is on their level, and nobody will notice the main thing. You will notice it, and, please, read it and write in the margins. And please, let us talk about it.

Drafts for an Introduction to *War and Peace*†

[*Draft 1*]

I wrote and then gave up writing an innumerable number of times the history of the year 1812, which became ever more real to me and which demanded, with greater and greater insistence, to be set down in clear, concrete images. Either the way in which I began seemed useless to me; or I wanted to capture everything I know and feel about that time and felt the impossibility of doing so; or the simple, banal, literary language and literary devices common to novels seemed to me so inconsistent with the majestic, deep, and many-sided content; or the need to unify through fiction all those images, pictures, and thoughts that rose up inside me as though of their own will became so repugnant to me I threw away what I had started to write and despaired of the possibility of expressing what I wanted to express and had to express.

But time and my strength were flowing away with every hour, and I knew that nobody would ever tell what I had to tell, not because what I had to tell was very important for mankind but because those sides of life that were worthless to others were important only to me, due to specific qualities in my development and personality (qualities characteristic of every person). Above all, traditions both of form and content oppressed me. I was afraid to write in a language different from that in which everybody writes. I was afraid that my writing would fall into no existing genre, neither novel, nor tale, nor long poem, nor history. I was afraid that the necessity to describe important personages of 1812 would force me to be guided by historical documents rather than by the truth. And while I was feeling all these fears time passed, and my work was not moving ahead. I began to cool towards it. Now, having tormented myself for a long time, I have decided to push aside all these fears and to write only that which I must tell, without worrying about what will come out of it all and without giving any name to my work.

[*Draft 2*]

In printing the beginning of this work, I do not promise either to continue it or to conclude it. We Russians in general do not know how to write novels in the sense in which this genre is understood in Europe. This work of mine is not a tale. No idea is being put forward in it; nothing is being proved; no single event is described in it. Still, it cannot be called a novel—with a plot that has growing complexity, intrigue, and a happy or

† The three drafts for an introduction were written in the last days of December 1864 or on the first two days of January 1865. They were translated by George Gibian from the texts printed in volume 13 of the Jubilee edition of Tolstoy's works, *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy* (Moscow, 1949), pp. 53–56. There is a fourth draft, pp. 56–57, which is not included here.

unhappy denouement, at which point interest in the narration ceases. In order to explain to the reader what this present work is, I find it most useful to describe the manner in which I began to write it.

In 1856 I started writing a tale with a certain direction, the hero of which was to be a Decembrist[1] returning with his family to Russia. Without intending to do so, I moved from the present time to the year 1825, a period of error and unhappiness for my hero, and I abandoned what I had begun. But even in the year 1825 my hero was already a grown-up family man. In order to understand him, I had to move once again back to his youth, and his youth coincided with the period of 1812, so glorious for Russia. I abandoned for a second time what I had started and began to write about the year 1812. The odors and sounds of that time are still dear to us but also so remote from us that now we can think about them calmly. But for a third time I abandoned what I had started, not because it was necessary for me to describe the earliest days of my hero's youth but, on the contrary, because among the half-historical, half-social, half-invented great characters of the great era, the personality of my hero was being pushed into the background, and the foreground was being occupied, with an equal interest for me, by old and young people and by men and women of that time. For the third time I turned back to an earlier period, guided by feelings that may seem strange to the majority of readers but which, I hope, will be understood by those whose opinions I value. I did it guided by a feeling similar to shyness that I cannot define in a single word. I was ashamed to write about our triumph in the struggle against Bonaparte's France without having described our failures and our shame. Who has not experienced that concealed but unpleasant feeling of embarrassment and distrust when reading patriotic works about the year 1812? If the cause of our victory was not accidental, but lay in the essence of the character of the Russian people and army, then that character must be expressed still more clearly in the period of failures and defeats.

So returning from 1856 to 1805, I set out to guide not one but many of my heroines and heroes from that time onward through the historical events of 1805, 1807, 1812, 1825, and 1856. I do not foresee the outcome of these characters' relationships in any one of those periods. No matter how much I tried to begin creating novel plots and denouements, I became convinced that this is not within my power, and I decided, in describing these characters, to yield to my habits and strengths. I tried only to give each part of my work its own independent source of interest.

A few more words of justification in answer to a remark many people will probably make. In my work there are only princes who speak and write in French, counts, and so forth, as if all Russian life were centered in those people. I agree that this is untrue and unliberal, and I can make only one, incontrovertible answer. The life of clerks, merchants, seminarists, and peasants is uninteresting and half unintelligible to me; the life of the aris-

1. A participant in the movement of constitutional reform, revolutionary in tendency, that culminated in the December 1825 uprising in Petersburg. The rebellion was put down, and many of its members were executed and others exiled to Siberia. Decades later, some of these exiled Decembrists were permitted to return to European Russia.

tocrats of that time, thanks to documents of that period and for other reasons, is intelligible, interesting, and dear to me.

[*Draft 3*]

This work is more similar to a novel or a tale than to anything else, but it is not a novel because I cannot and do not know how to confine the characters I have created within given limits—a marriage or a death after which the interest in the narration would cease. I couldn't help thinking that the death of one character only aroused interest in other characters, and a marriage seemed more like a source of complication than diminution of the reader's interest. I cannot call my work a tale because I am unable to force my characters to act only with the aim of proving or clarifying some kind of idea or series of ideas.

I cannot determine how much of my work will consist of what is now being published, because I do not know myself and cannot foresee what dimensions my work will assume.

My task is to describe the life and the encounters of certain people in the period 1805 to 1856.

I know that if I were occupied exclusively with that work and if that work of mine were carried on under the most favorable conditions, I should still hardly be in a position to complete my task. But, provided that I write it as I want to, I am convinced that interest in my story will not cease when a given section is completed, and I am striving toward this end. It seems to me that if my work is of any interest, then the reader's interest will not only be gratified at the end of each part of the work but will also continue. As a result of this special quality, this work cannot be called a novel.

Because of this special quality, I think that this work can be printed in separate parts without in any way losing the reader's interest and without inciting the reader to read the subsequent parts.

It will not be possible to read the second part without having read the first, but having read the first, it will be very possible not to read the second.

Some Words about *War and Peace*†

On publishing this work, on which I have spent five years of uninterrupted and exceptionally strenuous labor under the best conditions of life, I wish to express my own view of it and thus counteract misunderstandings which might arise in the reader's mind. I do not want readers of this book to see in it, or look for, what I did not wish, or was unable, to express, and I should like to direct their attention to what I wished to say but owing to the conditions of the work could not enlarge on. Neither my time nor capacity allowed me fully to accomplish what I intended, and I now avail

† This article was first published by Tolstoy in *Russky Arkhiv* (*Russian Archive*) in 1868. The translation by Aylmer Maude reprinted here appeared in volume III of the Centenary edition of *War and Peace* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932) 538–48, and was reprinted in the Inner Sanctum Edition (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1942) 1353–61.

myself of the hospitality of a specialist periodical to state, though but briefly and incompletely, the author's view of his work for those whom it may interest.

(1) What is *War and Peace*? It is not a novel, even less is it a poem, and still less an historical chronicle. *War and Peace* is what the author wished and was able to express in the form in which it is expressed. Such an announcement of disregard of conventional form in an artistic production might seem presumptuous were it premeditated and were there no precedents for it. But the history of Russian literature since the time of Púshkin not merely affords many examples of such deviation from European forms, but does not offer a single example of the contrary. From Gógol's *Dead Souls* to Dostoévski's *House of the Dead*, in the recent period of Russian literature there is not a single artistic prose work rising at all above mediocrity, which quite fits into the form of a novel, epic, or story.

(2) *The character of the period*. When the first part of this book appeared, some readers told me that this is not sufficiently defined in my work. To that reproach I make the following reply: I know what "the characteristics of the period" are that people do not find in my novel—the horrors of serfdom, the immuring of wives, the flogging of grown-up sons, Saltykóva,[1] and so on; but I do not think that these characteristics of the period as they exist in our imagination are correct, and I did not wish to reproduce them. On studying letters, diaries, and traditions, I did not find the horrors of such savagery to a greater extent than I find them now, or at any other period. In those days also people loved, envied, sought truth and virtue, and were carried away by passion; and there was the same complex mental and moral life among the upper classes, who were in some instances even more refined than now. If we have come to believe in the perversity and coarse violence of that period, that is only because the traditions, memoirs, stories, and novels that have been handed to us record for the most part exceptional cases of violence and brutality. To suppose that the predominant characteristic of that period was turbulence is as unjust as it would be for a man seeing nothing but the tops of trees beyond a hill, to conclude that there was nothing to be found in that locality but trees. That period had its own characteristics (as every epoch has) which resulted from the predominant alienation of the upper class from other classes, from the religious philosophy of the time, from peculiarities of education, from the habit of using the French language, and so forth. That is the character I tried to depict as well as I could.

(3) *The use of the French language in a Russian book*. Why in my book do Russians as well as Frenchmen sometimes speak Russian and sometimes French? The reproach that in a Russian book people speak and write French is like the reproach of a man who, looking at a portrait, notices black spots (shadows) on it which do not exist in nature. The painter is not to blame if to some people the shadow he has put on the face of the portrait appears as a black spot nonexistent in nature; he is only to blame if such shadows are put on wrongly or coarsely. Dealing with the beginning of the nineteenth

1. Darya Saltykóva (1730–1801) was notorious for having tortured and murdered scores of her serfs. Eventually she was tried and after lengthy procedures sentenced to the pillory and to confinement in a convent [*Editor*].

century, and depicting the Russians of a certain class and Napoleon and other Frenchmen who had so direct a part in the life of that epoch, I was involuntarily carried away to an unnecessary extent by the form in which they expressed their French way of thought. And so, without denying that the shadows put on by me are probably incorrect and coarse, I would only ask those to whom it seems absurd that Napoleon should speak now Russian and now French, to realize that this seems so to them only because they, like the man looking at the portrait, notice a black spot under the nose instead of observing the face with its lights and shades.

(4) *The names of the people in the book.* Bolkónski, Drubetskóy, Bilíbin, Kurágin, and others suggest well-known Russian names. When confronting fictitious with historical characters I felt it awkward for the ear to make a Count Rostopchín speak to a Prince Prónski, Strélski, or other princes or counts bearing such invented (single or hyphenated) names. Bolkónski or Drubetskóy, though they are neither Volkónski nor Trubetskóy, sound familiar and natural in a Russian aristocratic circle. I was unable to devise for all my characters names which did not sound false to my ear, such as Bezúkhov and Rostóv, and I could not find any other way to overcome this difficulty except by taking at random names quite familiar to a Russian ear and changing some of the letters in them. I should be very sorry if the similarity between the invented names and real ones should suggest to anyone that I wished to describe this or that actual person, more especially as the literary activity which consists of describing real people who exist or have existed has nothing in common with the activity I was engaged in.

M. D. Akhrosímova and Denísov are the only persons to whom I involuntarily and unreflectingly gave names closely resembling those of two particularly characteristic and charming people of the real society of that time. That was my mistake, arising from the specially typical character of those two persons, but my mistake in this matter is limited to their mere introduction, and readers will probably agree that nothing resembling the actual facts of their lives is ascribed to these characters in the novel. All the other people are entirely invented, and have for me no definite prototypes in tradition or in reality.

(5) *The divergence between my description of historical events and that given by the historians.* This was not accidental but inevitable. An historian and an artist describing an historic epoch have two quite different tasks before them. As an historian would be wrong if he tried to present an historical person in his entirety, in all the complexity of his relations with all sides of life, so the artist would fail to perform his task were he to represent the person always in his historic significance. Kutúzov did not always hold a telescope, point at the enemy, and ride a white horse. Rostopchín was not always setting fire with a torch to the Voronóvski House (which in fact he never did), and the Empress Márya Fëdorovna did not always stand in an ermine cloak leaning her hand on the code of laws, but that is how the popular imagination pictures them.

For an historian considering the achievement of a certain aim, there are heroes; for the artist treating of man's relation to all sides of life, there cannot and should not be heroes, but there should be men.

An historian is sometimes obliged, by bending the truth, to subordinate

all the actions of an historical personage to the one idea he has ascribed to that person. The artist, on the contrary, finds the very singleness of that idea incompatible with his problem, and tries to understand and show not a certain actor but a man.

In the description of the events themselves the difference is still sharper and more essential.

The historian has to deal with the results of an event, the artist with the fact of the event. An historian in describing a battle says: "The left flank of such and such an army was advanced to attack such and such a village and drove out the enemy, but was compelled to retire; then the cavalry, which was sent to attack, overthrew . . ." and so on. But these words have no meaning for an artist and do not actually touch the event itself. Either from his own experience, or from letters, memoirs, and accounts, the artist realizes a certain event to himself, and very often (to take the example of a battle) the deductions the historian permits himself to make as to the activity of such and such armies prove to be the very opposite of the artist's deductions. The difference of the results arrived at is also to be explained by the sources from which the two draw their information. For the historian (to keep to the case of a battle) the chief source is found in the reports of the commanding officers and of the commander in chief. The artist can draw nothing from such sources; they tell him nothing and explain nothing to him. More than that: the artist turns away from them as he finds inevitable falsehood in them. To say nothing of the fact that after any battle the two sides nearly always describe it in quite contradictory ways, in every description of a battle there is a necessary lie, resulting from the need of describing in a few words the actions of thousands of men spread over several miles and subject to most violent moral excitement under the influence of fear, shame, and death.

In descriptions of battles it is generally said that such and such armies were sent to attack such and such points and were then ordered to retire and so on, as if assuming that discipline, which subjects tens of thousands of men to the will of one man on a parade ground, will have the same effect where it is a question of life and death. Anyone who has been in a war knows how untrue that is,[2] yet the reports are based on that assumption, and on them the military descriptions. Make a round of the troops immediately after a battle, or even next day or the day after, before the reports have been drawn up, and ask any of the soldiers and senior and junior officers how the affair went: you will be told what all these men experienced and saw, and you will form a majestic, complex, infinitely varied, depressing, and indistinct impression; and from no one—least of all from the commander in chief—will you learn what the whole affair was like. Two or three days later the reports begin to be handed in. Talkers begin to narrate how things happened which they did not see; finally, a general report is drawn up and on this report the general opinion of the army is formed. Everyone is glad to exchange his own doubts and questionings for this

2. After the description of the battle of Schön Grabern had appeared in the first part of my novel, I was told of Nikoláy Nikoláevich Muravëv Kárski's remark about that description—a remark which confirmed my conviction. He, a commander in chief, remarked that he had never read a truer account of a battle, and that his own experience had convinced him of the impossibility of a commander in chief's orders being carried out during a battle.

deceptive, but clear and always flattering, presentation. Question a month or two later a man who was in the battle, and you will no longer feel in his account the raw, vital material that was there before, but he will answer according to the reports. Thus I was told of the battle of Borodinó by many lively, clever participants in that affair. They all told me one and the same thing, and all in accord with the false accounts of Mikhaylóvski-Danílevski, Glínka,[3] and others: even the details they mentioned were all identical, though the narrators had been several miles apart from one another.

After the fall of Sevastopol the Commander of the Artillery, Kryzhanóvski, sent me the reports of the officers of artillery from all the bastions, and asked me to draw up a report from these (more than twenty) separate accounts. I am sorry I did not take copies of them. It would have been the best example of the naïve, inevitable, military falsehoods from which reports are made. I imagine that many of my comrades who drew up those reports will laugh on reading these lines, at the recollection of how they, by order of their superior, wrote what they could not know. All who have had experience of war know how capable Russians are of doing their work in a war and how little fit they are to describe it with the boastful falsity indispensable for that purpose. Everyone knows that in our armies that duty of drawing up reports and dispatches is generally carried out by men of foreign birth.

I say all this to show the inevitability of falsehood in military descriptions which serve as material for military historians, and thus to show how unavoidable are frequent disagreements between artists and historians in their understanding of historical events. But besides this necessary error in the narration of historical events, I noticed in the histories of the epoch on which I was engaged (probably as a result of the habit of grouping events to express them briefly, and of conforming to the tragic import of those events) a special kind of high-flown diction in which the falsehood and perversion extended not merely to the occurrences but also to the interpretation and significance of them. Often when studying the two chief historical works on that epoch, Thiers and Mikhaylóvski-Danílevski, I felt perplexed that such books could have been printed and read. To say nothing of the fact that they present the same events in a most serious, significant tone, citing the sources they have drawn on, and are yet in diametrical opposition to one another, in these histories I came across such accounts that I did not know whether to laugh or to cry, remembering that these books are the chief memorials of that epoch and have had millions of readers. I will give a single example from the work of the famous historian Thiers. After telling how Napoleon brought with him forged paper rubles, he says: *Relevant l'emploi de ces movens par un acte de bienfaisance* digne de lui et de l'armée française, *il fit distribuer des secours aux incendiés. Mais les vivres étant trop précieux pour être donnés longtempts à ces ètrangers, la plupart ennemis. Napoléon aima mieux leur fournir de l'argent, et il leur fit distribuer des roubles papier.* [Dignifying the use of these means by an act of charity *worthy of himself and of the French army,* he ordered help to be given to the victims of the fire. But provisions being too scarce

3. The chief Russian writers on the campaign of 1812 [A. *Maude*].

to be given for long to foreigners, most of whom were enemies, Napoleon preferred to supply them with money, and had paper rubles distributed among them.]

This passage when taken by itself amazes one, I will not say by its immorality but simply by its stupidity; but in the whole book it does not surprise one, for it is quite in accord with the general high-flown, pompous style, devoid of any direct meaning.

So the tasks of artist and historian are quite different, and the reader should not be surprised when my book disagrees with an historian in the descriptions of events or persons.

But an artist must not forget that the popular conception of historical persons and events is not based on fancy but on historical documents in as far as the historians have been able to group them, and therefore, though he understands and presents them differently, the artist like the historian should be guided by historical material. *Wherever in my novel historical persons speak or act, I have invented nothing, but have used historical material of which I have accumulated a whole library during my work. I do not think it necessary to cite the titles of those books here, but could cite them at any time in proof of what I say.*

(6) Finally, the sixth and for me most important consideration relates to the small significance that in my conception should be ascribed to so-called great men in historical events.

Studying so tragic an epoch, so rich in the importance of its events, so near to our own time, and regarding which so many varied traditions survive, I arrived at the evident fact that the causes of historical events when they take place cannot be grasped by our intelligence. To say (which seems to everyone very simple) that the causes of the events of 1812 lay in Napoleon's domineering disposition and the patriotic firmness of the Emperor Alexander I is as meaningless as to say that the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire were that a certain barbarian led his people westward and a certain Roman emperor ruled his state badly, or that an immense hill that was being leveled toppled over because the last laborer struck it with his spade.

The cause of such an event in which millions of people fought one another and killed half a million men cannot be the will of one man. Just as one man could not have leveled the hill, so no single man could cause five hundred thousand to die. But what were the causes? One historian says it was the aggressive spirit of the French and the patriotism of the Russians. Others speak of the democratic element that Napoleon's hordes carried abroad and of Russia's need to form relations with Europe, and so forth. But why did millions of people begin to kill one another? Who told them to do it? It would seem that it was clear to each of them that this could not benefit any of them, but would be worse for them all. Why did they do it? Endless retrospective conjectures can be made, and are made, of the causes of this senseless event, but the immense number of these explanations, and their concurrence in one purpose, only proves that the causes were innumerable and that not one of them deserves to be called the cause.

Why did millions of people kill one another when it has been known since the world began that it is physically and morally bad to do so? Because

it was such an inevitable necessity that in doing it men fulfilled the elemental zoological law which bees fulfill when they kill one another in autumn, and which causes male animals to destroy one another. One can give no other reply to that terrible question.

This truth is not only evident, but is so innate in every man's consciousness that it would not be worth while proving it, were there not another sentiment in man which convinces him that he is free at each moment that he commits an action.

Taking a wide view of history we are indubitably convinced of a sempiternal law by which events occur. Looking at it from a personal point of view we are convinced of the opposite.

A man who kills another, Napoleon who orders the crossing of the Niemen, you or I handing in a petition to be admitted to the army or lifting or lowering our arm, are all indubitably convinced that our every action is based on reasonable grounds and on our own free will, and that it depends on us whether we do this or that. This conviction is so inherent in us and so precious to each of us that in spite of the proofs of history and the statistics of crime (which convince us of absence of freedom in the actions of other people) we extend the consciousness of our freedom to all our actions.

The contradiction seems insoluble. When committing an act I am convinced that I do it by my own free will, but considering that action in its connection with the general life of mankind (in its historical significance) I am convinced that this action was predestined and inevitable. Where is the error?

Psychological observations of man's capacity for retrospectively supplying a whole series of supposedly free reasons for something that has been done (as I intend to expound in more detail in another place) confirm the assumption that man's consciousness of freedom in the commission of a certain kind of action is erroneous. But the same psychological observations prove that there is another series of actions in which the consciousness of freedom is not retrospective but instantaneous and indubitable. In spite of all that the materialists may say, I can undoubtedly commit an act or refrain from it if the act relates to me alone. I have undoubtedly by my own will just lifted and lowered my arm. I can at once stop writing. You can at once stop reading. I can certainly, by my own will and free from all obstacles, transfer my thoughts to America or to any mathematical problem I choose. Testing my freedom I can lift and forcibly lower my hand in the air. I have done so. But near me stands a child and I raise my hand above him and want to lower it with the same force onto the child. I *cannot* do this. A dog rushes at that child, and I *cannot* refrain from lifting my hand at the dog. I am on parade, and cannot help following the movement of the regiment. In action I cannot refrain from attacking with my regiment or from running when all around me run—I *cannot*. When I appear in court as the defender of an accused person, I cannot help speaking or knowing what I am going to say. I cannot help blinking when a blow is directed at my eye.

So there are two kinds of actions: some that do and others that do not depend on my will. And the mistake causing the contradiction is due only to the fact that I wrongly transfer the consciousness of freedom (which

properly accompanies every act relating to my *ego*, to the highest abstractions of my existence) to actions performed in conjunction with others and dependent on the coincidence of other wills with my own. To define the limits of freedom and dependence is very difficult, and the definition of those limits forms the sole and essential problem of psychology, but observing the conditions of the manifestation of our greatest freedom and greatest dependence, we cannot but see that the more abstract and therefore the less connected with the activity of others our activity is, the more free it is; and on the contrary, the more our activity is connected with other people the less free it is.

The strongest, most indissoluble, most burdensome, and constant bond with other men is what is called power over others, which in its real meaning is only the greatest dependence on them.

Having wrongly or rightly become fully convinced of this in the course of my work, I naturally was unable—when describing the historical events of 1805, 1807, and especially of 1812 in which this law of predetermination[4] is most prominently displayed—to attribute importance to the actions of those who thought they controlled the events but who introduced less free human activity into them than did all the other participants. The activity of these people interested me only as an illustration of the law of predetermination which in my opinion guides history, and of that psychological law which compels a man who commits actions under the greatest compulsion, to supply in his imagination a whole series of retrospective reflections to prove his freedom to himself.

4. It is noteworthy that almost all those who have written of the campaign of 1812 have seen something special and fateful in that event.